



MANUAL

OF THE

Congregational Church of Christ

AT

GLENCOE, ILL.



ADOPTED OCTOBER 30, 1873.







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CHICAGO:
H. Willson & Co. 157 La Salle St.
1873.



HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Regular preaching services upon the Sabbath were commenced in the village of Glencoe but a short time after its incorporation in 1869. For a year or more they were conducted by transient supplies.

During the year beginning November 1, 1870, Prof. S. C. Bartlett, who had become a resident of the place, was invited to supply the pulpit three-fourths of the time, and, the following year, every Sabbath. The Communion of the Lord's Supper was occasionally observed. In the Autumn of 1872, the conviction had become deep and general that some closer organization was required for the best interests of religion in the community.

The first distinct proposal that a Congregational Church should be formed, came from members of the Methodist and Baptist communions. Notice was given on Sunday, October 13, 1872, that this question would form the subject of discussion at the next Wednesday evening prayer meeting. The meeting on Wednesday was well attended, and the question was fully discussed with absolute unanimity of feeling and opinion, that a Congregational Church ought at once to be organized.

Several members of other communions proposed to join it, while all pledged it their most cordial interest and co-operation. It was voted to proceed, and S. C. Bartlett, S. T. Lockwood and P. N. Sherwood were chosen a Committee to arrange all the preliminaries of such an organization. On the 23rd of October, the committee reported a Confession of Faith and Covenant, together with a Constitution and By-Laws, which on Wednesday, October 30th, were discussed, accepted and adopted, as herewith subjoined. Opportunities were given for any persons to present themselves, who might wish to unite with the Church on profession; and two persons were examined, propounded and accepted.

A Council was called to meet at the Church on Tuesday Nov. 12th, at 5 o'clock P. M., to complete the organization. The Churches invited were the Congregational Church of Evanston; and the First, Union Park, Leavitt Street and Tabernacle Congregational Churches of Chicago; and Profs. F. W. Fisk, J. T. Hyde and G. N. Boardman of the Chicago Theological Seminary.

The Council met at the time appointed, and after a full examination of all the circumstances and documents, unanimously voted to proceed with the customary exercises of organization and recognition. These services were performed at 7½ o'clock in the evening, as follows: reading of the minutes of the Council, by Rev. E. N. Packard, Scribe; Invocation and Reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. E. F. Williams; Sermon, by Prof. F. W. Fisk; propounding the Confession of Faith and Covenant, by Rev. Moses Smith; Prayer of recognition and consecration, by Rev. L. Hammond; Fellowship of the Churches, by Rev. C. D. Helmer; Address to the Church, by Rev. E. P. Goodwin.

The following persons were organized into the Congregational Church of Christ in Glencoe:

By letter:—From the Union Park Congregational Church in Chicago, Samuel C. Bartlett, Mrs. Mary L. Bartlett, Edwin J. Bartlett, Miss Alice W. Bartlett, William A. Bartlett, Charles H. Howard, Mrs. Kate F. Howard, Samuel T. Lockwood, Mrs. Juliette P. Lockwood, Mrs. Annie E. Nutt; from the New England Congregational Church in Chicago, Frederick W. Newhall, Mrs. Ellen Newhall; from the Forty-Seventh St. Congregational Church, Chicago, Henry Willson, Mrs. Jane Willson; from the Congregational Church in Danbury, Conn., Washington A. Nichols; from the Congregational Church, Kenosha, Wis., Miss Laura A. Newberry; from the Congregational Church in Evanston, Mrs. Carrie L. Daggett; from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Evanston, Augustus H. Hovey, Mrs. Alice M. Hovey, Miss Hattie M. Hovey, Miss Sarah J. Hovey, Archibald W. Fletcher, Mrs. Elizabeth Fletcher, from the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Kenosha, Wis., Porter N. Sherwood, Mrs. Sarah V. Sherwood; from the Protestant Episcopal Church in Evanston, Mrs. Jeanette C. Starr. By profession:—Alexander Hammond, George F. Newhall.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.—NAME.

The name of this Church shall be the Congregational Church of Christ, in Glencoe.

ARTICLE II.—GOVERNMENT.

SEC. 1. The Government and affairs of this Church shall be conducted in general accordance with the principles and established usages of Congregationalism.

SEC. 2. This Church maintains as fundamental principles of church order, both the self government of the local Church and the fellowship of the several churches. While amenable to no other ecclesiastical body, and acknowledging no Head but the Lord Jesus Christ, it also recognizes the duty of seeking the advice of Councils in the organization of a church, in the settlement and dismissal of pastors, in cases of peculiar internal difficulty, and in matters of common interest; and it heartily proffers its Christian sympathy, communion and co-operation to all other bodies of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III.—MEMBERSHIP.

All persons may become members of this Church who give credible evidence of regeneration, and who assent to the Confession of Faith and Covenant.

ARTICLE IV.—OFFICERS

SEC. 1. The essential officers of the Church are a Pastor and Deacons. They shall be elected by ballot.

SEC. 2. For the further ordering of its affairs, the church shall also appoint a Clerk, a Treasurer, a Superintendent of the Sabbath School, and five Trustees. These officers shall be chosen annually, but shall in any case hold office until their successors are appointed.

SEC. 3. The Pastor, who shall be expected to become a member of the Church, shall have control of the pulpit and the exercises of public worship, shall preach the Word, shall ordinarily be the Moderator in the meetings of the Church, shall take the spiritual oversight of the flock, shall administer the Sacraments, and shall execute the discipline of the Church, when so ordered.

In the settlement of a Pastor, the Church shall act by an Ecclesiastical Council, called in the usual manner: and such a Council shall be mutually called by the Pastor and the Church, to act upon the question of his dismissal, whenever the Pastor shall desire it, or the Church shall so vote in a meeting notified on the preceding Sabbath for that specified purpose.

SEC. 4. The Deacons shall aid the Pastor in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, shall take charge of the communion service and of providing for the communion table, shall have the oversight of the poor members, for visitation and relief, and shall assist the Pastor generally in the spiritual care of the congregation.

SEC. 5. The Clerk shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of all business meetings of the Church, and shall submit the same for revision and correction at each meeting preparatory to the communion. He shall keep a register of the Church members with the date of their reception and of their removal, and a record of all baptism. He shall issue letters of dismission voted by the Church, keep on file all important correspondence, all written official reports, and all other valuable papers of the Church, shall audit the accounts of the Treasurer, and shall make an annual report.

SEC. 6. The Treasurer shall receive the funds of the Church; the charitable contributions, he shall dispense under the direction of the Deacons; the benevolent contributions he shall forward to their respective destinations; and the funds for the support of the Church he shall disburse upon the order of the Trustees, and shall make an annual report to the Church.

SEC. 7. The Trustees shall see that they are legally incorporated according to the laws of the State; shall hold the property of the Church manage its pecuniary affairs, superintend the raising of the minister's salary, provide for the incidental expenses, subject always to the general rules and the directing vote of the Church, but having no power to buy, sell, mortgage, or transfer property, without a specific vote of authority by the Church, at a meeting which has been notified on two preceding Sabbaths; and shall make an annual report of their doings to the Church. A minority of the Trustees may be chosen from those who are not members of this Church.

SEC. 8. The Pastor and Deacons shall constitute a Prudential Committee of the Church. Their duty shall be to confer together concerning the interests and wants of the Church, to watch for its purity, to inaugurate measures needed for its welfare, to transact such business as may from time to time be assigned to them by vote of the Church, and in general to care for those matters of common concern, which might otherwise be neglected.

SEC. 9. The Prudential Committee and Sabbath School Superintendent, shall constitute an executive Committee of the Sabbath School. They shall decide upon its management, arrange for its officers and exercises, and have special charge of its interests, subject at all times to a directing vote of the Church.

ARTICLE V.—DISCIPLINE.

SEC. 1. The rule of discipline is the law of Christ recorded in Matt. xviii. 15-17.

SEC. 2. Discipline may consist in admonition, suspension, public withdrawal of fellowship, or excommunication.

ARTICLE VI.—ORDINANCES.

SEC. 1. This Church, while retaining the method of baptism practiced by the Congregational Churches, will respect both in theory and in practice, the preferences of any persons, whose conscientious convictions may hold them to other modes of baptism.

SEC. 2. It shall be the privilege of christian parents in regular Church standing, to consecrate their households to the Lord in baptism.

SEC. 3. The invitation to the Lord's Supper shall be extended to members of other Evangelical churches in good standing.

ARTICLE VII.—AMENDMENTS AND BY-LAWS.

SEC. 1 This Constitution, the Confession of Faith and the Covenant may be altered by a vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting, at an Annual Meeting, or at a meeting called specially for that purpose by notice four weeks previously from the pulpit on the Sabbath, provided that the substance of the proposed alteration shall have been publicly given in writing from the pulpit on the Sabbath four weeks previously, and provided also that the change does not infringe upon the doctrines or organic principles of the Church.

SEC. 2. By-Laws, to carry out ^{the provisions of} this Constitution, may be enacted at any regular business-meeting. ^

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

Accepting the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God and the only infallible rule of religious faith and practice, we confess our faith in the one living and true God, revealed as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the Creator and Preserver of all things, whose purposes and providence extend to all events, and whose righteous government is over all his creatures.

We believe that man was created upright; that he sinned and fell; and that in consequence of the Fall, all mankind in their natural state are alienated from God, without holiness, and under the condemnation of the Divine law.

We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, having taken upon himself our nature, has by his voluntary sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of the world; that salvation is freely offered to all; and that all who truly repent and believe in Christ will be pardoned, justified and saved.

We believe that all who are thus justified through faith in Christ, are first renewed by the Holy Ghost, according to the eternal purpose of God, and will owe their preservation in holiness and their final salvation to grace alone.

We believe that the moral law of God remains in full force as a rule of duty, and that a renewed heart will show itself in the acts and duties of an obedient and holy life.

We believe that the Christian Sabbath, the Ministry of the Word, the Visible Church, and the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are divinely appointed, and are binding on the followers of Christ until his coming.

We believe that there will be a resurrection of the dead and a day of judgment, when every one will give account of the deeds done in the body; and that the wicked will go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal.

Do you thus solemnly profess to believe?

[The Pastor will address those who come by profession, and who have been baptized in infancy, as follows:]

Do you, who were baptized in your infancy, now accept that baptism as the sign of your present faith in Christ and the seal of your covenant with God?

[Baptism will then be administered to those who have not been baptized.]

COVENANT.

You do now, in the presence of God and man, solemnly declare the Lord Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to be your God and portion forever, accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour, and the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier, Comforter and Guide. You humbly and cheerfully devote yourself to God in the everlasting covenant of his grace, You consecrate all your powers and faculties to his service and glory, and relying upon the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, you engage to walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord; to assemble yourself with his people for his worship; to keep holy his Sabbath day; to maintain secret prayer and promote family worship; to lead a life of piety toward God and benevolence toward man; to seek the honor of Christ's name and the interests of his kingdom; and, denying ungodliness and every worldly lust, to live soberly, righteously and godly in this world.

[Those received by letter will here come forward.]

You do now cordially join yourself by Covenant to this Church of Christ solemnly engaging to submit to its government and the discipline which Christ has appointed; to strive earnestly for its peace, edification and purity; and to walk with its members in fraternal love, faithfulness, circumspection, meekness and sobriety.

[Here the members of the Church will rise.]

We, then, the members of this church of Christ do now receive you into our communion, and promise to watch over you with Christian affection and tenderness, ever treating you in love as a member of the body of Christ, who is Head over all things to the church.

This we do, imploring the Great Shepherd of Israel, our Lord and Redeemer, that we and you may have wisdom and grace to be faithful in his covenant, and to glorify him with the holiness which becometh His house forever.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace." Amen !

BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE I.—MEMBERSHIP.

SEC. 1. Persons desirous of becoming members of this Church upon profession of their faith, shall be examined orally, or by a written account of their religious experience, in the presence of the Church, at any regularly-called meeting, as to their religious history and their present Christian experience. If the examination be deemed satisfactory, their names shall be publicly announced on the Sabbath preceding the Communion Sabbath, the vote of the Church upon their reception, shall be taken at the Church meeting preparatory to the Communion, and they shall be received into fellowship on the Communion Sabbath, by publicly assenting to the Confession of Faith, receiving baptism, (unless previously baptized,) and entering into Covenant. In special cases the Church may however, by vote, instruct the Pastor and Deacons to examine candidates in private, and report the substance of the examination to the Church for action.

SEC. 2. Members of other Evangelical Churches, applying for admission by letter, may be received by vote of the Church, and by publicly assenting to the Confession of Faith and Covenant. It is the right and privilege of the Church to seek acquaintance with the Christian life of such applicant members, by asking for a narrative of their religious history.

SEC. 3. Letters of dismission to Evangelical Churches shall be given by vote of the Church, to all members in good and unimpeachable standing who desire them. Members who remove their residence beyond the reach of this Church should, if practicable at once transfer their relation to some other Church. If such do not apply for letters within one year from the time of leaving, satisfactory reasons must be given for the delay of the application, before the dismission will be granted.

ARTICLE II.—BUSINESS MEETINGS.

SEC. 1. There shall be an Annual Business Meeting of the Church on the third Wednesday in December of each year, at which the following business shall be transacted: 1. Reports of Officers—(a) Clerk's Report; (b) Treasurer's Report; (c) Report of S.S. Superintendent; (d) Report of the Trustees; (e) Report of Prudential Committee. 2. Election of Officers. 3. Miscellaneous Business.

SEC. 2. The ordinary and regular business meeting of the Church, shall be upon the first Wednesday of each month; but business may be transacted at any regular meeting of the Church, or at a special meeting called from the pulpit on the preceding Sabbath by the Officers of the Church, or by the written request of five adult members of the Church.

SEC. 3. Deacons shall be elected for the term of three years. The Pastor, when installed by Council, shall hold office until regularly dismissed by Council. Other officers shall be elected annually.

SEC. 4. A vacancy in the Pastoral office is to be filled only after careful inquiry and prayerful deliberation. Vacancies in the office of Deacon, may be filled at any regular business meeting, after a notice given four weeks previously from the pulpit on the Sabbath; other vacancies may be filled at any regular business meeting, after notice given on the previous Sabbath.

SEC. 5. In the transaction of business, this Church will be governed by the established rules of parliamentary proceedings.

ARTICLE III.—STATED RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

SEC. 1. Besides the regular services of the Sabbath, the Church will hold a prayer meeting ordinarily on Wednesday evening of each week.

SEC. 2. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered upon the first Sabbath of January, March, May, July, September and November. Preparatory services shall be held at such time as the Pastormay deem most suitable. In connection with each Communion service, a special collection shall be taken to aid the poor of the Church, and for other purposes.

SEC. 2. A monthly concert of prayer for the conversion of the world shall be observed upon the first Sunday evening of each month, at the close of which a collection shall be taken for Missionary purposes.

SEC. 4. Contributions shall be solicited in the Congregation for the leading objects of Christian beneficence, according to a schedule adopted by the Church from time to time.

SEC. 5. In the absence or lack of a Pastor, the supply of the Pulpit shall be provided for by the Prudential Committee, subject at any time

to a directing vote of the church. But no person shall be employed as a supply for a longer period than three months, without a vote of the church.

SEC. 6. The Superintendence and control of the Sacred Music connected with the Sabbath services, shall be under the charge of the Prudential Committee, subject to the direction of the Church. But no expenses shall be incurred by them for the purpose, except as authorized by the Trustees or directly by vote of the Church.

ARTICLE IV.—DISCIPLINE.

SEC. 1. While every member of the Church is alike under obligation to watch and to labor for its purity, it shall be a special duty of the Prudential Committee to secure its effectual discipline.

SEC. 2. It shall be deemed orderly for any member who has failed in the effort privately to rectify a Church offence, to make known the fact first to the Prudential Committee. If, however, they shall fail to give attention to the case, it shall be his right and duty to bring it in person before the Church.

SEC. 3. In presenting the case to the Church, aggrieved persons must state their charges in writing. If the Church vote to entertain the complaint, they will then appoint a time for hearing of the case, and summon the accused to be present to take his trial, furnishing him with a written copy of the charges and the names of the witnesses relied on for proof, at least a week before the trial.

SEC. 4. Upon the trial the accused may call to his aid any member of the Church; in case of his non-appearance, a member shall be appointed to defend his case. The confession of the accused, or the testimony of two witnesses, or that which is fairly equivalent, shall be requisite for conviction.

SEC. 5. Excommunication or withdrawal of fellowship, shall be publicly announced.

SEC. 6. An excommunicated person may, upon evidence of repentance, confession of sin, and reformation of his conduct, be re-admitted to the Church on profession.

ARTICLE V.—ECCLESIASTICAL CONNECTION.

This Church will place itself in the customary connection with the Association or Conference of Congregational churches.

ARTICLE VI.—ALTERATIONS AND AMENDMENTS.

These by laws may be altered or amended at any regular business meeting of the church, notice of the proposed change having been given publicly, at least one month previously, and also announced the Sabbath next preceding the meeting.



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